<u>In the Claims:</u>

<u>Please cancel claims 1 - 11 and add the following new claims:</u>

12.   (New) A system for venting of gas and preventing ingress of animals and debris into the system, comprising:

a ventilation pipe comprising a top opening for venting gas;

a pipe protector comprising a tubular sleeve transitioning in diameter to a larger conical neck transitioning in diameter to a still larger hollow head wherein the pipe protector is mounted on the top opening in the ventilation pipe and remains in place by gravity such that the hollow head remains external to the ventilation pipe, the conical neck rests along its transition on the top opening of the ventilation pipe with at least a portion of the neck extending into the pipe resulting in a low tolerance fit for a variety of ventilation pipe sizes, and the tubular sleeve is easily disposed within and radially inwardly from the ventilation pipe to fit a variety of ventilation pipe sizes by leaving an appreciable gap bounded by the tubular sleeve, the conical neck, and the ventilation pipe;

wherein the tubular sleeve and conical neck comprise a plurality of ventilation orifices sized suitably small enough to prevent ingress of animals and debris and still vent gas which may be trapped in said gap;

wherein the hollow head comprises a further plurality of ventilation orifices sized suitably small enough to prevent ingress of animals and debris and still vent gas.

13. (New) The system of claim 12, wherein said hollow head comprises a convex shaped top end.

14. (New) The system of claim 12, wherein said hollow head comprises an apex shaped top end.

15. (New) The system of claim 12, wherein the ventilation orifices are circular in cross section and about 3 millimeters in diameter to prevent ingress of animals and debris and still vent gas.

16. (New) The system of claim 12, further comprising a collar surrounding the conical neck such that the collar rests atop the ventilation pipe opening in the event the ventilation pipe opening is larger than the hollow head and prevents the pipe protector from slipping into the pipe.

17.   (New) A ventilation pipe protector adaptable to a ventilation pipe for venting of gas and preventing ingress of animals and debris, comprising:

a pipe plug adapted to be mounted on a top opening in a ventilation pipe comprising a tubular sleeve transitioning in diameter to a larger conical neck transitioning in diameter to a still larger hollow head, said plug comprising a plurality of ventilation orifices spaced throughout its length sized small enough to prevent ingress of animals and debris and still vent gas;

means for accommodating a wide variety of sized ventilation pipes comprising sizing the hollow head to remain external when mounted on a ventilation pipe, sizing the conical neck to rest along its transition when mounted on a top opening of a ventilation pipe with at least a portion of the neck adapted to extend therein resulting in a low tolerance fit for a variety of ventilation pipe sizes, and sizing the tubular sleeve to be disposed radially inwardly when inserted within a ventilation pipe to fit a variety of ventilation pipe sizes by leaving an appreciable gap bounded by the tubular sleeve, the conical neck, and a ventilation pipe, wherein the plurality of ventilation orifices also vent gas which may be trapped in said gap.

18. (New) The system of claim 17, wherein said hollow head comprises a convex shaped top end.

19. (New) The system of claim 17, wherein said hollow head comprises an apex shaped top end.

20. (New) The system of claim 17, wherein the ventilation orifices are circular in cross section and about 3 millimeters in diameter to prevent ingress of animals and debris and still vent gas.

21. (New) The system of claim 17, further comprising a collar surrounding the conical neck such that the collar rests atop the ventilation pipe opening in the event the ventilation pipe opening is larger than the hollow head and prevents the pipe protector from slipping into the pipe.